

Valley Climate Champions Program

Program Overview:

In celebration of Earth Day 2021, FirstLight is excited to announce the launch of our Valley Climate Champions education grant program – created to engage Franklin County high school and middle school teachers and students on the region’s growing clean energy sector and to highlight the urgency of climate change. The program will include a total of seven \$1,000 grants available to high school and middle school teachers – one grant for each of the Franklin County school districts and Franklin County Technical School. An additional \$2,000 will be awarded to the grant recipient with the best end product presented in the Spring of 2022, chosen by a selection committee.

For all eligible teachers that are interested in applying to be part of the Valley Climate Champions Program, we ask that you complete a [very brief online application form](#) by July 30, 2021. In this straightforward application, please share your preliminary approach and how you plan to engage your students on the positive impact of clean energy on the region including highlighting local jobs in the renewable energy sector, energy equity, environmental justice and other relevant topics.

We will announce the recipients of our grants right before the start of the 2021 fall semester. As an end product for each of the selected projects, FirstLight will be looking for each of the grantees to work with their students to develop a short video or other piece of content on a theme – suggestions are outlined below – that can be shared with the broader community, promoted on our company website and shared via social media and other community news outlets.

Theme examples may include:

- Clean energy jobs
- Environmental justice & equity
- Resilience & sustainability
- Climate science & clean technology



We're looking for your students' thoughts on how they think these pressing topics are important to them and their communities. The final end product can be comprised of interviews, projects or another relevant area that is of interest to them. And, most importantly, we want you and your students to have fun!

"FirstLight's Valley Climate Champions program is an extraordinary way for our local high school and middle school students to build the necessary skills to become the next generation leaders in our fight against climate change and to be part of our region's clean energy transition. GCC is proud to be an advisor to this program, which will allow Franklin County students to weigh in on the important issues facing our communities, including environmental justice, increasing awareness about sustainable technologies and climate science, and exploring the clean energy workforce – a growing industry that employs people right here in the Valley."

– Yves Salomon Fernandez, President of Greenfield Community College

Valley Climate Champions Program Timeline:

- Program Launch: Earth Day (April 22, 2021)
- Application Deadline: August 20, 2021
- Grant Recipients Announcement: August 2021 before start of 2021-2022 school year
- \$1,000 Grants Distributed: Ahead of 2021 fall semester
- Final Projects Due: All video or content will be due at completion of each grant before or by April 4, 2022 (note: the \$2,000 grant will be announced in April/May 2022 after all projects are reviewed by the selection committee)

If you have any questions, please contact Carter Wall at 413-834-2126 or email her at carter.wall@firstlightpower.com.



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